

ALL IN COLOUR — MAKES LEARNING A JOY

Once Upon a Time

EVERY WEDNESDAY

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PRICE 1/6

The Magic Patches—a lovely story
in pictures—on page 12.



Gabriella's Sunbeam



1. In a land where the sun shone every day, lived Gabriella. She was a milkmaid. Every morning, when the sun rose, a tiny golden sunbeam would dance gaily through the shutters over the window and touch Gabriella's eyelids gently, to awaken her.



2. However, there came a morning when the little sunbeam crept silently through the shutter, her light so dim that no matter how hard she tried, she could not wake Gabriella from her sleep. "Alas," sobbed the sunbeam. "Whatever will become of me now?"



3. That morning, when Gabriella woke, it was late. She leapt out of bed in dismay. She had not delivered the milk, so everyone in the village would be late having breakfast, because of her. How she ran to try to make up for lost time and how people stared!



4. The people in the village were very puzzled. "It's not like Gabriella to be late," they said. When, tired, Gabriella got home that night the little sunbeam was crouching miserably on her window-sill. "Oh, why didn't you wake me?" asked Gabriella.



5. The sunbeam sighed. "I tried," she said sadly. "But my lovely golden light is so faded that I can hardly be called a sunbeam any more. Each year, a shining new dress is given out, but this year, I was playing with a butterfly and forgot about it."



6. The sunbeam told Gabriella that she would have to stay dull and faded for the rest of the year. Gabriella couldn't bear to see the poor thing look so unhappy, for she had grown fond of her and, besides, she did rely on the sunbeam to wake her in the morning.



7. "I must do something," said Gabriella. "Somehow, the mornings wouldn't be the same without her." That night, Gabriella did not go to bed. She waited at her window until dawn, and there, all over the garden, were cobwebs, shining gold in the morning sun.



8. Gently, Gabriella gathered the cobwebs and made a dress, light as thistledown, such as a fairy—or a sunbeam—might wear. The next night, she slept happily once more, knowing that the sunbeam, in her bright new dress, would be there to wake her again.

All Sorts of Insect-eating Plants ...and Strange Fruits



1. **Sundews** are found in many countries. Their flat leaves are covered with sticky, brightly-coloured hairs. Any insect which touches the leaf sticks to the hairs which then close over it. Plants which eat animals are called carnivorous plants.



2. There are only about twelve different kinds of insect-trapping plants in the world. These **Butterworts** have glistening green leaves, with an odd smell which attracts insects. The insect is trapped on the sticky leaf surface, which closes over it.



3. **Pitcher Plants** have colourful leaves, which are curled round to form jugs, or pitchers, partly filled with liquid. Insects land on the top of the pitcher, slip on the glassy surface at the top and slide down inside, where they are drowned.



4. Some of the leaves of the **Venus Fly Trap** can open and close like a book. In the centre of each leaf are three stiff hairs. When an insect touches one of them, the two halves of the leaf close up and the spikes along the edges lock together like a cage.



5. **Bladderworts** have no roots. They float in the water with only their flowers above the surface. The trailing stems have lots of little bladders which are traps for tiny water creatures. The door of the trap swings open when an animal bumps into it.



6. **Crab Apples.** These fruits come from a wild apple tree. They have a sharp flavour and are most often used in the making of crab apple jelly. Nothing to do with seashore crabs, the name comes from a Swedish word skrabba, which means wild apple.



7. **Medlars.** Medlars come from a small tree of the rose family, which has white flowers and grows in the regions around the Mediterranean Sea. Its fruits are picked when green, but are not eaten until they are stored and have become soft with decay.



8. **Breadfruit.** This is the large round fruit of a tree which grows in great numbers in the South Sea Islands. The natives use it as food. Breadfruit gets its name from the flesh inside the fruit, which is spongy and looks very much like bread.



9. **Pawpaws, or Papaws.** These fruits come in two different sizes. In North America they are about 4 inches long and grow on small trees. In South America they grow on tall, palm-like trees and are about 8 inches long. The fruits are yellowish.



10. **Mandarin Oranges.** Very easy to peel and sweet to eat, these fruits are small flattened oranges from China. They are very much like tangerines, which first came from Tangier in the north-west part of Africa. The name can also be spelt mandarine.



11. **Lichees.** These come from Chinese trees of the soapberry family. They are oval fruits with a rough woody shell. When this outside shell is taken off you will find inside a juicy fruit, rather like a large peeled grape. It has a sweet and "scented" flavour.



BREXER RABBIT

This week . . . Brer Fox gets tripped-up.

BREXER RABBIT was so cunning that however hard they tried, the other animals could never catch him. They tried their hardest, especially Brer Fox and Brer Wolf, because they were tired of the tricks which that cunning Brer Rabbit played on them, but it was no good. Brer Rabbit was too clever for them.

In the end, Brer Wolf got tired of keeping watch for Brer Rabbit, coming along the road, so that he and Brer Fox could jump out and catch him. "I'm going off to dig my carrot patch," he grumbled to Brer Fox. "It'll do me much more good than trying to catch that rabbit."

Brer Fox, he didn't like to be beaten at all, but there didn't seem much he could do about it. Just thinking about that rabbit would spoil the happiest day for him. There he would be, strolling happily down the lane, when the word "rabbit" would pop into his head and then he would get to thinking how Brer Rabbit had tricked him and then he would get angrier and angrier—and there wasn't a

thing he could think of to do about it.

Then, one day, Brer Fox was out for a stroll. He was walking along the road, just minding his own business and thinking about nothing in particular, when all of a sudden, he heard such a squeaking and chattering and laughing in front of him. Brer Fox, he just stopped and stared.

There, playing and gambolling and leap-frogging in the meadow, who should he see but the baby rabbits. Those little rabbits, they made Brer Fox think at once of Brer Rabbit and it made Brer Fox's blood boil all over again. And then he began to think, "Well, maybe I can't catch Brer Rabbit, but that's no reason why I can't catch a baby rabbit or two. That would be nearly as good. Yes. That's what I'll do."

Brer Fox crept along until he reached a place where the hedge was rather low and then, with a mighty roar, he jumped right over the top, landing right in the middle of the baby rabbits.

Of course, when they saw Brer Fox coming, the baby rabbits let out a great

squeal. Then they took to their heels and fled in all directions, and by the time Brer Fox had picked himself up, those little rabbits couldn't be seen for dust.

"Never mind," said Brer Fox, patting his whiskers. "There's always next time. I'll catch one of those baby rabbits yet."

The baby rabbits were so scared that they didn't stop running until they were inside their own house and then they fell in a heap on the floor.

Their mother came rushing to see what had happened and they told her about how they had been chased by Brer Fox.

"Well, there's only one thing to do," said their mother. "Next time you play out in the meadow, one of you must keep watch for Brer Fox."

The baby rabbits thought that was a very good idea and whenever they went out to play after that, one of them always kept watch for Brer Fox and called out to the others to hide, if Brer Fox came along.

The trouble was, that it was hard for a baby rabbit to see two ways at once and,

of course, it wasn't much fun for the look-out not being able to join in the games, so it wasn't long before Brer Fox was able to sneak up on them again. Off went the baby rabbits again, squealing and yelling, in all directions.

The baby rabbits began to get tired of having their games interrupted all the time and never being able to play in peace and their mother was getting quite worried, for she was sure that one of the days Brer Fox would manage to catch one of the baby rabbits. In the end, she told them they had better stay and play at home and not go out into the meadow, where there was nobody to look after them.

Now, Brer Rabbit didn't like this much. He had taken to having a nap in the afternoon, after his meal. He would sit and doze in his favourite armchair, feeling very happy and contented, but when the baby rabbits started to stay at home, he didn't get much peace at all. For one thing, they made a lot of noise and that kept him awake. For another thing, they ran around a lot and often tripped over his feet. Brer Rabbit thought it was time he did something about the situation.

He thought hard and it seemed to him

that Brer Fox was at the root of the trouble. He listened carefully to what the baby rabbits had to say about Brer Fox creeping up on them whenever he got the chance, and an idea began to form in his mind.

Next day, he said, "I think you children should go out and play in the meadow again, but this time I will come with you."

Then he gathered the little rabbits around him and whispered in their ears. They all listened carefully and nodded and then burst out laughing.

Brer Rabbit took a ball of string and a big stick and then off they all went, into the meadow. Brer Rabbit stretched the string across the path where he knew Brer Fox walked, low down, so that he wouldn't see it. He tied one end to a stump and the other end went over the branch of a tree and one of the baby rabbits held it loosely. Then Brer Rabbit hid at the side of the path, clutching his big stick.

Sure enough, before long, along came Brer Fox. The little rabbits pretended they hadn't seen him and kept on jumping and running, just as if they hadn't got a care in the world.

"Aha," said Brer Fox. "They haven't

seen me. I'll show them this time." He crept forward very quietly until he was quite near the little rabbits and then he rushed for them, as fast as he could go—and that was where he made his mistake. For as soon as he saw Brer Fox start to run, the little rabbit holding the string stretched it tight and before he knew what had happened, Brer Fox had tripped over it and landed bonk! in the middle of the path, and what a bonk! he did go. Before he had time to get his breath, there was Brer Rabbit, raining blows on Brer Fox with that big stick just as hard as he could go and all the little rabbits laughing and jumping with glee. Brer Fox, he was so winded, he couldn't even get to his feet and run away.

"Mercy, Brer Rabbit," he called. "Stop beating me with that stick and I promise the little rabbits can play in peace. I won't chase them again."

Brer Rabbit put down his stick and Brer Fox, he crept home. The little rabbits played out in the meadow for as long as they liked and Brer Rabbit took his daily nap in peace once more.

**Enjoy another chuckle with Brer Rabbit
in Once Upon A Time next week.**



Well, Fancy That!



1. **A WINDY RESCUE.** Not very long ago, a helicopter pilot made an amazing rescue. He managed to rescue a yacht which was about to drift on to some jagged rocks. It seemed that nothing could save the boat until the pilot thought up a splendid plan. He tilted his

machine sideways and flew a little to the side of the boat. As you probably know, the wind created from the whirling rotor blades is tremendous, and it was this wind that blew the boat away from the treacherous rocks to safety.



2. **IT'S A DOG'S LIFE.** In Finland, dogs are trained to smell out deposits of iron ore. It is said that these dogs are five times as successful at it than the geologist who is trained to know all about the earth and its different layers. One trainer earned £800 for the use of his dog's talents and the dog earned six sausages!



3. **LOST AT SEA.** The Goodwin Sands lie off the Kent coast. Once, about 4,000 acres of land was fenced off from the sea and was owned by Earl Godwin. The wall was not kept in good repair and by 1100 A.D. the sea rushed through. All that is left of that land is the Goodwin Sands.

FAMOUS NAMES

Interesting facts about names which all begin with the word "Flying"



1. **Flying Scotsman.** This is the name of a very famous express train which runs from London to Edinburgh, leaving at 10 o'clock in the morning. It is shown in about the year 1950 when pulled by a powerful steam engine, which was streamlined and had the name Silver Link. This engine—and The Mallard, which holds the world's steam speed record—was designed by Sir Nigel Gresley.



2. **Flying Platform.** It has been known for many, many years that rockets have the power to lift themselves off the ground, and this gave rise to the invention of a jet engine. These jet engines were used to lift off the ground a strange contraption called the Flying Bedstead, and later experiments produced a one-man flying machine—the Flying Platform shown above.



3. **Flying Dutchman.** There are many strange tales of the sea, of ships and crews that have mysteriously vanished. Sailors are superstitious persons as a rule and at one time would never set sail on a Friday because it was bad luck to do so. To see a ghost ship—the Flying Dutchman—was a warning of great disaster.



4. **Flying Angel.** A flying angel is a kind of pick-a-back ride, in which the person being carried sits on the shoulders of another person, with his legs coming down in front. Usually it is Daddy who gives a child a "flying angel" and he holds the youngster by the wrists to prevent a slip and a fall.

This is a Memory Test. When you have read the story, turn to page 19 and try to answer the questions, to see how good your memory is.

Signs of the Zodiac

CANCER

June 21st — July 20th

Cancer, or The Crab, is the sign of the Zodiac which affects persons with a birthday falling between June 21st and July 20th. Each Zodiac sign has an interesting story, and this is the one about Cancer the Crab:

The ruler of the sea is Poseidon. He is more often called King Neptune, and with a trident in his hand he rides through the waves on a powerful horse. Mermaids and all things living in the sea are his subjects, and The Crab is one of them. But the Crab also has another ruler—the Goddess of the Moon. Her name is Selene and she has the power to control the rise and fall of the tides of all the seas and tidal rivers of the World. The Moon travels round and round the Earth and "pulls" some of the water towards itself as it passes by. (The Sun also has an effect on tides and when the Moon and Sun "pull" together the tides are highest.)

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The Magic Patches



1. Once there lived an orphan girl named Linda. She was poor, but she was very kind-hearted. One day, she saw some country folk jeering at an old beggar-man. "How funny he looks," they cried. "His coat has five patches and each patch is a different colour."



2. Linda felt sorry for the old man, for people often laughed at her because she was poor and her clothes patched. She took him home and shared her supper with him. Then she took his coat and sewed on new patches, all the same colour. He was very pleased.



3. "You are a kind girl, and someday you will get your true reward," the old man said. Next morning he was gone, but there on the ground lay the five patches. Linda sighed. "I wish I had as many dresses as those patches," she said, picking them up. At once, a trunk appeared and inside were five beautiful dresses.



4. Then Linda saw that one patch had disappeared. "Why, they must be magic patches," she said. "One wish for each patch. That poor old man didn't know." Linda wondered how she could find the old man and give the patches back and then she had an idea. "Why, I can wish him back," she cried. So that is what she did.



5. At once, the old man appeared, smiling kindly. "I know the patches I left you were magic patches," he said. "I am no beggar, but a magician, who likes to seek out kindness and reward it. Now wish, my dear." Linda wished at once for a lovely home.



6. The little cottage was transformed immediately into a fine castle, filled with beautiful things. "Now you must have servants to look after it for you," smiled the magician, and in came a maid and a footman carrying tea. Outside, a gardener tended the roses.



7. "Now I have everything I could ever wish for," sighed Linda. "Everything?" smiled the magician, and Linda blushed. "Well, I have sometimes dreamed of marrying a handsome prince," she murmured. At that moment, a voice from outside the castle cried, "Hello! Prince Rupert is weary from hunting and seeks shelter."



8. There, in the garden, was a handsome young prince. As soon as he and Linda saw each other, they fell in love and soon they were married. Linda had only one magic patch left and she used this to wish that they would never know unhappiness. Her wish was granted and they lived happily ever after.



BEAUTIFUL PICTURES

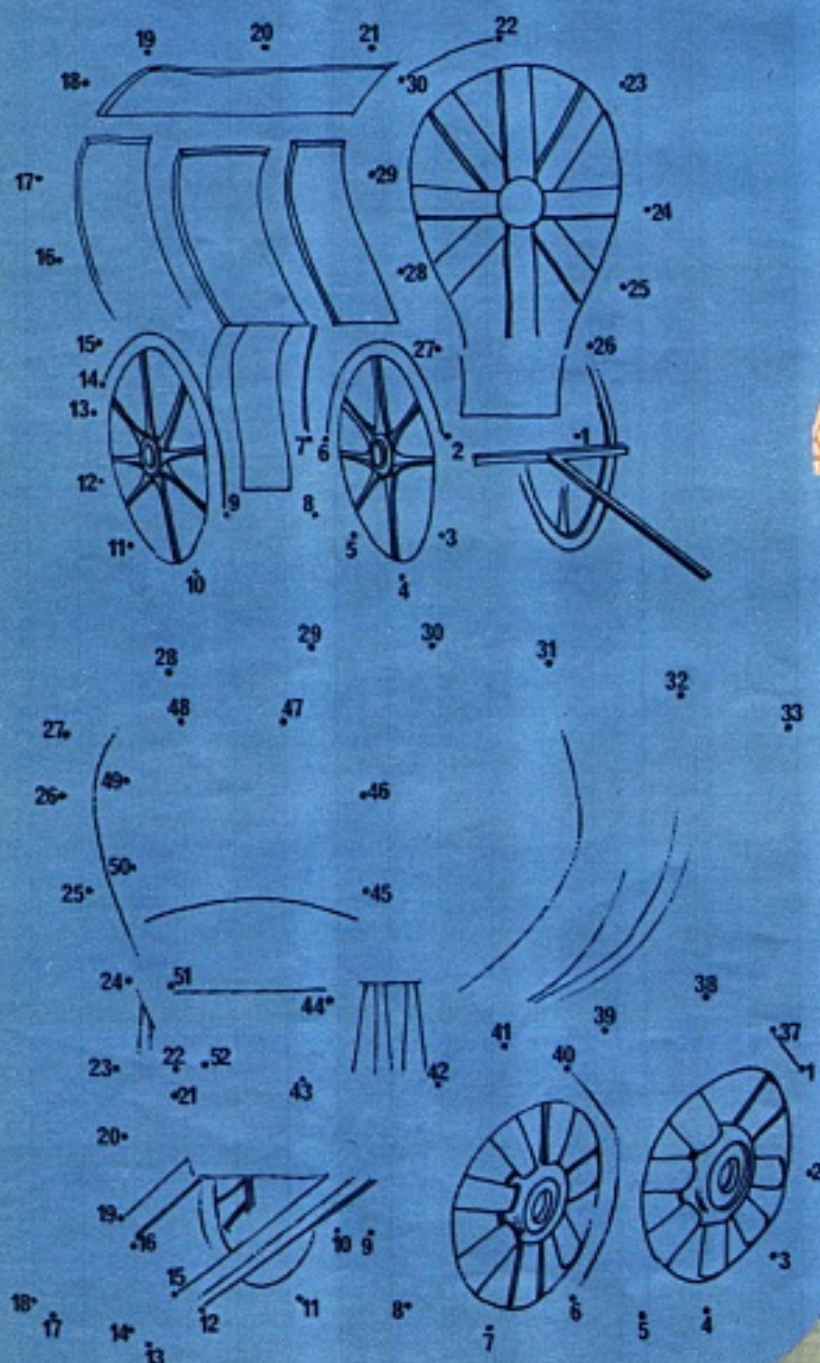
The photographer who took this lovely picture might well be described as an "artist" because he has produced something of beauty and colour. It is a picture of two boys fishing in the lake at Grasmere, a beautiful village in Westmorland. You may like to know

that one of our most famous poets, William Wordsworth, is buried in the churchyard of Grasmere village. It is a scene worth cutting out and keeping. Many Once Upon A Time readers have complete collections of Beautiful Paintings and Pictures.

King James the First

This monarch was the son of Mary Queen of Scots, from whom he took over the throne of Scotland in the year 1567 with the title of James the Sixth. In 1603 he became King James the First of England. Although he was a clever writer, King James was a mean and timid person. As the picture shows, he wore very decorative clothes. He died in 1625, aged 59.

You can have fun with the two puzzle pictures below. Join the dots of the first one from 1 to 30 to complete a covered wagon, which was called a whirlicote. The second picture, when completed by joining the dots from 1 to 52, will show you a stage wagon of James's time.







The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse

Stephanie opens the fete.

STEPHANIE, the town mouse, looked out of the window of her smart town house one morning, and was just in time to see the postman walking up the steps.

"Oh, good," thought Stephanie to herself. "A letter. I do hope it's something nice and exciting."

She went to the door to pick up the letter and stared in surprise at the spidery handwriting on the envelope. "How odd," Stephanie murmured. "It's from my country cousin, Winifred."

Well, as Stephanie said to her boyfriend, Nigel, when he called that evening, she was so surprised that you could have knocked her down with a feather.

"It was from Winifred," Stephanie told him. "She wants me to go down there and open a village fete in aid of an orphanage. Think how dreary it would be. A village fete, with all those country bumpkins and all that fresh air and gnats and midges and things. Can you imagine it?"

"Yes," said Nigel, who thought it might be rather fun, and felt secretly that Stephanie was being rather tiresome. "You know, you'd be awfully good at opening a village fete. I mean," he added, "you have so much poise, Stephanie. You never mind people looking at you, and of course, everyone there would be looking at you." He was being quite clever, really, for he knew that Stephanie liked being admired.

"You have that gorgeous new dress, too, and I bet no one in the village has ever seen a dress like that," he went on. "What a pity you don't want to go."

At that, Stephanie's fur bristled. "Who said I didn't want to go?" she asked. "I do hate gnats and mosquitoes, but it's a shame for the orphan mice, poor little things. I do feel it's my duty to do something for them gnats or no gnats, so you can take me in your car, Nigel."

Nigel went off feeling very pleased with himself. He enjoyed a trip to the country, but he couldn't often get Stephanie to agree to go. He loved being out on the

open road and whizzing along fast in his big car, but Stephanie hated the noise and the wind, which blew her fur about.

Stephanie was all ready when Nigel called on the morning of the fete. She had on her new dress and a big hat, covered in flowers and she looked simply gorgeous. Nigel had not been idle, either. He had polished his big car until it shone. As it drew up in front of the door, all the neighbours peeped out from behind their curtains and twittered excitedly. "Stephanie must be going somewhere very special today," they said to each other.

Stephanie felt very pleased. As she walked elegantly down the steps, and got into the car, she could see the curtains moving ever so slightly and knew that everyone was admiring her.

"Do drive carefully, Nigel," she said. "It may be only a little village affair, but I do want to arrive looking my very best."

Nigel promised not to drive too fast and he was very careful, for when they arrived at the village, Stephanie hardly had a hair out of place.

They stopped at Winifred's house first. "Oh, Stephanie, you look wonderful," sighed Winifred, when she saw her cousin. "I'll show you the way to the field where the fete is."

As they arrived, they saw that their route was lined with little girl mice, dressed as fairies. They carried flowers and behind them stood the village band, which began to play. "For she's a jolly good fellow" as Stephanie passed. Stephanie felt very pleased, for she heard plenty of squeaks of "Oh, isn't she lovely!" "What a beautiful mouse!"

The Mayor of the nearby town was there to welcome Stephanie and she was delighted when he swept off his hat, bowed low and kissed her hand.

They led her to a small platform and she made a short speech and declared the fete open. Two pretty little girl mice came forward and shyly handed her a bunch of beautiful flowers. Everyone cheered and clapped and then off they went to join in the fun.

"Madam Mouse, I'm sure you would like to try the coconut shy," said the Mayor. "Pray, let me hold your flowers for you."

Winifred, at the cake stall, saw Stephanie coming towards her. Her smart town cousin was looking so grand and causing such a stir, it made Winifred quite giddy with excitement.

"Yoo-hoo, Stephanie," she called, waving a paw. But Stephanie didn't feel like chatting to Winifred, just then. She was much too busy talking to the Mayor and other important people.

However, Nigel had heard and he had seen Winifred. He made his way over to her at once. He had also seen that Winifred was in charge of the cake stall and it had been far too long since he had had any of Winifred's cakes.

"I shall have one of each kind of cake, please, Winifred," he said, pulling his money out of his pocket. Then he saw several little orphan mice, standing wistfully in the corner of the stall. "And a cake for each little mouse, too," said Nigel, who was very kind-hearted.

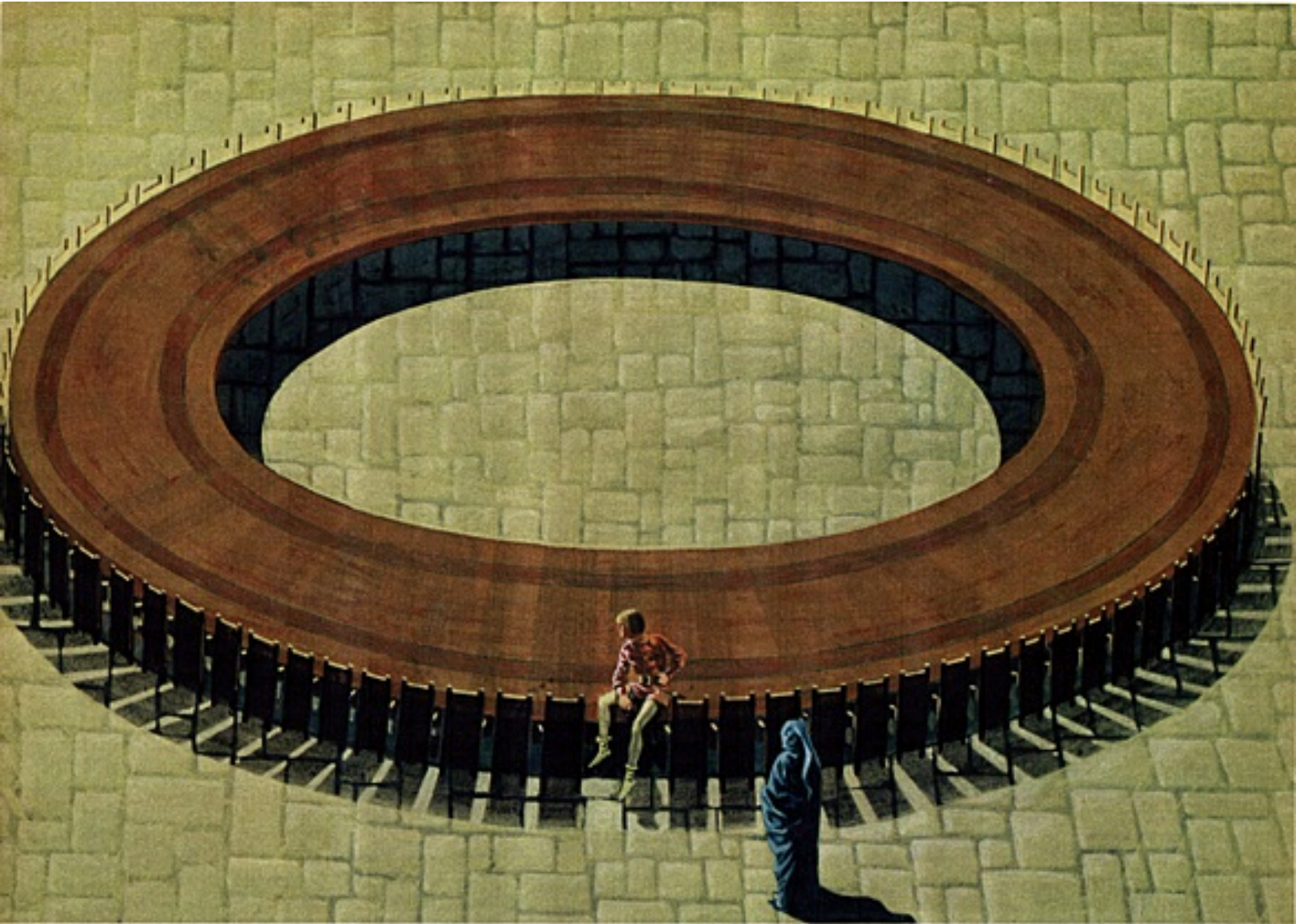
"Oh, please, sir," said one little mouse, very boldly. "Is that your car?"

"Yes," laughed Nigel. "And I know what I'll do. I'll give everyone rides at sixpence a trip, but orphan mice can go free."

The mice were delighted and Nigel soon did a roaring trade, taking both small and big ones for rides around the field and he soon had quite a lot of money for the fete.

When all the mice had had their rides, Nigel wandered off to finish looking around the fete. Across the other side of the field he came upon a most marvelous thing. It was a big, brightly-coloured gas-filled balloon, with a basket underneath it, in which people could have rides up into the sky. Nigel was thrilled. He went over to the balloon-owner to ask if he could have a ride.

Next week you can read what happens to Nigel when he goes for a balloon ride.



King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table

BY the time King Arthur reached the age of twenty-five he had made up his mind to marry. The lady of his choice was named Gwenevere, and she was the daughter of King Leodegrance of Camelard. King Arthur had first met Gwenevere when he and his knights were helping King Leodegrance to fight a battle against some powerful enemies.

Arthur and Gwenevere fell in love with one another, and so there came a day when the people of England learned that their popular young king was soon to marry.

After he had returned to his palace in London, King Arthur told his old friend Merlin, the wizard, to go down into the land of Camelard and make arrangements for the royal wedding.

"Does the marriage of your daughter Gwenevere to King Arthur of England please you, O lord king?" Merlin asked King Leodegrance when he had reached the court of Camelard.

"Indeed it does, my old friend," smiled King Leodegrance. "I could not choose a man of greater honour and nobleness than Arthur of England to wed fair Gwenevere."

Now, in those far-off days it was the custom for a rich man to give his daughter what was called a "dowry" when she got married.

A dowry was a wedding gift which the bride brought to her husband. It could be money, or jewels, or lands. Of course, King Leodegrance knew that the King of England needed no more riches, so he thought of a more unusual dowry.

"Merlin, my friend, I have a wonderful idea," said King Leodegrance. "The dowry shall be the *Table Round* which Arthur's father, Uther Pendragon, gave me long years ago. I feel sure that such a gift will please King Arthur."

Now, the *Table Round* was a most unusual thing which had been made by old Merlin, the wizard. It was a huge round table with seats for many of the Knights who would gather

round it when summoned by King Arthur.

The high-backed seats were made of rare and costly woods, and carved and gilded in a style which made it worthy of any king in the world.

"Such a gift will give King Arthur great pleasure, O lord king," Merlin told King Leodegrance.

And so, on the day when Gwenevere and her father set out from Camelard upon the long journey to London the *Table Round* went with them, together with one hundred of King Leodegrance's knights.

He could not spare more than one hundred, for many of his knights had been killed in the recent war.

No gift could have pleased King Arthur more than the *Table Round*. He was delighted. And in the days before the great wedding, old Merlin often found Arthur standing admiring it in the vast hall where it had been set up.

"Scour the land for fifty of our most noble

knights," King Arthur told Merlin, one day. "It will be a great honour for them to have a place in the hall of the Round Table."

But only twenty-eight knights could Merlin find who were worthy of so great an honour. You see, King Arthur was not content to have any but the very best.

It was the day before his marriage to fair Gwenevere that King Arthur founded the great Order of the Round Table, the fame of which was to last for all time.

The one hundred and twenty eight bold knights solemnly took the vows of true knighthood. They promised loyalty to the King of England, to help the oppressed, and to fight only those who made war against good and honest people.

"In time, the vacant places at the Round Table shall be filled by men whose bravery and knightly actions prove them worthy to be with you who are so honoured this day," said King Arthur.

Then the Knights of the Round Table drew their swords, holding the gleaming blades on high and raising their voices in a thunderous great cheer which echoed again and again through the royal palace.

On the following day, King Arthur and Gwenevere were married. It was a day of rejoicing, not only in London, but throughout England.

The colour and pageantry made it a wonderful scene, long remembered by those people who saw it.

Old Merlin was especially happy as he watched the coronation ceremony. For it was Merlin who had protected Arthur when he was a little baby. And it was Merlin who,

years later, worked magic to aid him in proving that Arthur was the rightful King of England.

So, the wedding of Arthur and Gwenevere seemed certain to bring not only happiness to the young lovers, but also peace and justice to the people of England . . . upheld by King Arthur's Knights of the Round Table!

Now, it so happened that among the guests at the coronation was a young man named Lancelot. He was the son of King Ban, an old friend of King Arthur.

When King Ban returned to his own land, he left Lancelot at the court of King Arthur. He wished his son Lancelot to learn knightly deeds and the noble bearing which might one day earn him the high honour of becoming one of the Knights of the Round Table.

Lancelot was a tall, strong and handsome young man. He soon showed himself to be fearless as well as eager to learn all the skills of a warrior knight.

With his friend Gawaine—who was King Arthur's nephew—Lancelot spent many hours of every day practising sword-play, and "tilting".

This was the name given to the dangerous sport of two knights riding at one another on horseback with their long spears held forward to knock the other out of the saddle!

Of course, these two young men were not yet knighted. But one day, when King Arthur was watching them, he said to Merlin:

"Methinks 'twill not be long before those two will be as skilled as any."

"Yes, my lord king," smiled Merlin. "Especially do I favour young Lancelot. He has the strength and heart of a lion. He will never bow to the might of any tyrants, no matter how powerful they may be! I prophesy we shall see the day when the name of Sir Lancelot will be held in high esteem throughout our land. He will bring great honour to England and the Knights of the Round Table, with his valiant deeds."

Merlin the wizard had the gift of being able to see into the future. And Merlin was soon to be proved right.

Another story in the life of King Arthur and his Knights next week.

Here are some questions from the story "Signs of the Zodiac" on page 10. How many can you answer without looking back at the story?

1. What is the other name for King Neptune, ruler of the sea?
2. Who is the Goddess who controls the rise and fall of tides?
3. What are the dates covered by the Cancer sign of the Zodiac?
4. What causes the highest tides of all on Earth?





The WISE OLD OWL

Knows all the answers

The Wise Old Owl is here again to answer many interesting questions which you have asked.



1. What is a pack-horse bridge?

"A pack-horse bridge has places for people to stand in so that a loaded pack-horse can squeeze past. In olden times they would have been very crowded indeed for besides the many travellers on foot, there would have been flocks of sheep and herds of cattle going or coming from a manor or a market. In those days, the people who lived in the towns relied on the big country estates to grow extra food for them, and it was the peasant's job to take it."



2. What is a loofah?

"A loofah is a climbing plant which has a very long stem and has tendrils which cling to anything that will help it to climb. The fruit contains a network of fibres and when the flesh has dried away there is left a sponge-like object which is used in bathrooms."



3. Why do trees in some parts of the country lean over?

"It is likely that you will see a tree bending if it is exposed to the full blast of the wind. This happens a lot in the West Country where strong winds often blow. The tree bends when it is only a sapling and grows in the same direction."



4. Why does a cat have a rough tongue?

"The tongue of the cat is used almost like a file. Unlike the dog, who can crack bones, the cat has to rely on its teeth for pulling the meat off and its tongue for licking the bone clean. It also helps the cat to keep its fur clean."



5. Who was the smallest man who ever lived?

"Jeffrey Hudson was a great favourite at the court of Charles I, and measured only 18 inches tall at the age of 30. Believed to be the smallest man, he delighted the court on one occasion by allowing himself to be brought to the table hidden in a pie."